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FRIDAY
MARCH 12, 1954

We went over to the Embassy this morning to see Doug Dillon and talk to him about his conversation yesterday with Mr. Bidault. Bidault told him the French Government hoped to commence the EDC debate before the Easter holidays but first needed several conditions satisfied, the chief of which was to reach an agreement with Mollet. This will be an intricate matter.

I lunched at the Dutch Embassy. The guest of honor was Mr. Luns, one of the two Foreign Ministers. There were a large number of people there. I sat between Ethel Van Boetzelaer and Christine Van Starkenborgh. Afterwards I talked to Baron Guillaume, Luns, Van Boetzelaer, and Van Starkenborgh. They all feel the French Government ought to press for a debate on the EDC but all have an almost complete lack of confidence in the Government doing so. The Belgian Senate is expected to vote today.

I saw George Carey at the house tonight. He is leaving tomorrow morning for Vienna and then to Indo-China. He really has a wonderful life and is very good at his job.

I have almost finished Nancy Mitford's book on Madame de Pompadour. It is a best seller, very entertainingly written, weak on history, and heavily prejudiced in favor of the heroine -- certainly one of the most attractive women who ever lived, with great taste and considerable judgment in all things except politics.

We had dinner tonight with General and Madame Billotte. The Billottes had the Jacquinots, the Duchets, President Pinay, the de la Béraudières, the Achilles, Eve Curie and ourselves for an excellent and amusing dinner.

I had a long talk afterwards alone with Pinay. He had had lunch yesterday with Guy Mollet. They found themselves in accord on all points discussed and Pinay thinks it now depends entirely on the determination of the Government whether

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a debate on EDC will commence before the Easter holidays. In that case, he will speak after the holidays, and as soon as possible before the vote. He has been campaigning intensively for EDC and thinks it will command a majority if debate commences before Easter. If it is postponed until later he considers the chances of passage [redacted] uncertain. His conclusion was that Laniel should act at once, but he judges the Prime Minister severely. He esteems him to be an opportunist without political courage.

Duchet, as always, was fun. We talked about our speeches together on the occasion of wine festivals at Beaune. He is a former minister, a present deputy, and perennially Mayor of Beaune, ardent and attractive.

Jacquinot and Billotte are outright opponents of the EDC. The former, Minister of Overseas Territories, has just returned, with Simone, from a comprehensive African tour.

The Belgian Senate ratified the EDC Treaty this afternoon by a majority of more than 3 to 1. This is splendid and Van Zeeland is entitled to great credit for it.

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